

# Illinois Interagency Dispatch Center 2007 End of Year Report



**United States Forest Service  
Midewin National Tall Grass Prairie  
United States Fish and Wildlife Service  
United States National Park Service  
Illinois Department of Natural Resources**



## Illinois Interagency Dispatch Center 2007 End of the Year

2007 was an average year for local wildfire activity but the dispatch center was very busy, especially in the spring, with prescribed fires. The first wildfire of the season was in February on the Hidden Springs Ranger District with the final fire occurring in November on the Mississippi Bluffs Ranger District.

Mobilization of resources out of the dispatch area was steady all summer. We sent folks to 22 different states to help out this year participating in 9 of the 10 regions (Alaska is the only one we did not send folks to). Individual participation was for a variety of reasons from wildland fire, wildland fire use, all risk incidents, and prescribed fire efforts to plant health and law enforcement activities. John went to Montana for a month to help with the pre fire season preparations on the Flathead National Forest as well as helped out at the GACC and in Michigan while I spent 3 weeks in Casper Wyoming as their acting Center Manager.

Locally we created 10 incidents in ROSS (Resource Ordering and Statusing System) 6 of which were for Midewin National Tall Grass Prairie and 4 for the Shawnee National Forest. Between the two agencies, we generated 21 overhead, 10 Engine, and 16 engine personnel resource orders while canceling only 4. These resource needs were for local wildland fire and prescribed fire incidents, as well as Midewin Hotshot and Shawnee National Forest detail positions.

In order to keep track of our dispatch activity, we fully put into place a numbering system starting at 001. These numbers indicate specific activities where our center provided some form of support. In 2007 we initiated 189 Incident Actions which was up from 2006. These Incident Actions incorporate wildland fire activity, prescribed fire activity, resource orders (both on and off Forest), law enforcement and public assist activity, as well as Training and various other activities. In 2007 Illinois Interagency Dispatch Center provided support in 39 wildfires and 195 prescribed fire projects.

On the wildfire side, Shawnee National Forest had 32 fires for 209 acres, Midewin National Tall Grass Prairie had 3 fires for 2 acres, and Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge had 4 fires for 100 acres. In the prescribed fire programs, Shawnee National Forest had 28 RX projects for a total of 4276 acres burned. Midewin National Tall Grass Prairie had 10 RX projects with 1858 acres burned, while Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge burned 1168 acres in 19 RX projects. The State of Illinois had a total of 93 wildfires burning 710 acres and 138 RX projects burning a total of 6414 acres.

## RX Burn Activity

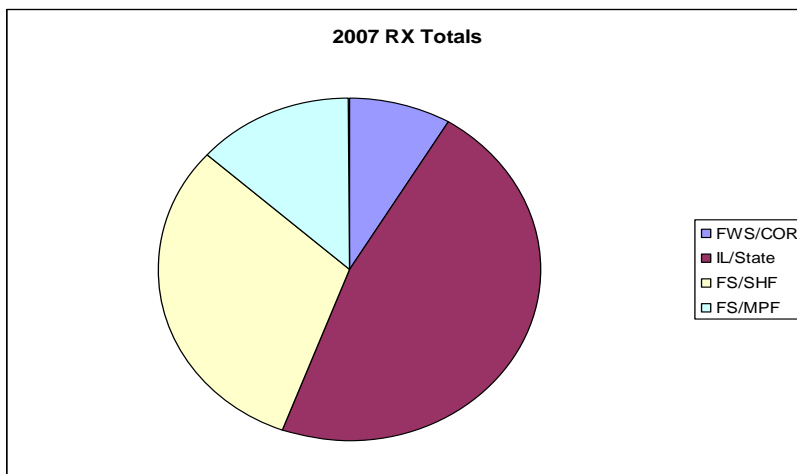
For calendar year 2007, we had the following activity where the dispatch center reported information to the National Situational Report. The State of Illinois burned a large percentage of overall acres, however, all agencies proved to have very active Prescribed Fire Programs in 2007

IL State = 6414 acres

FS/SHF = 3150 acres

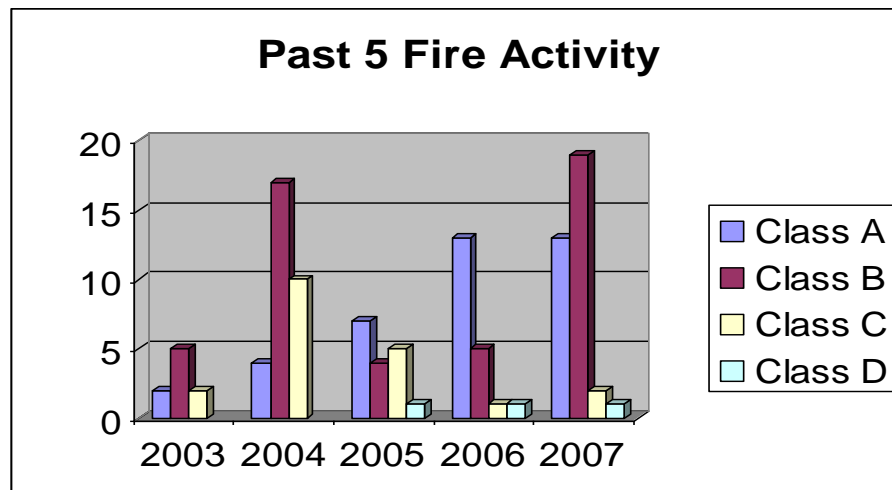
FS/MPF = 1816 acres

FWS/COR = 1168 acres



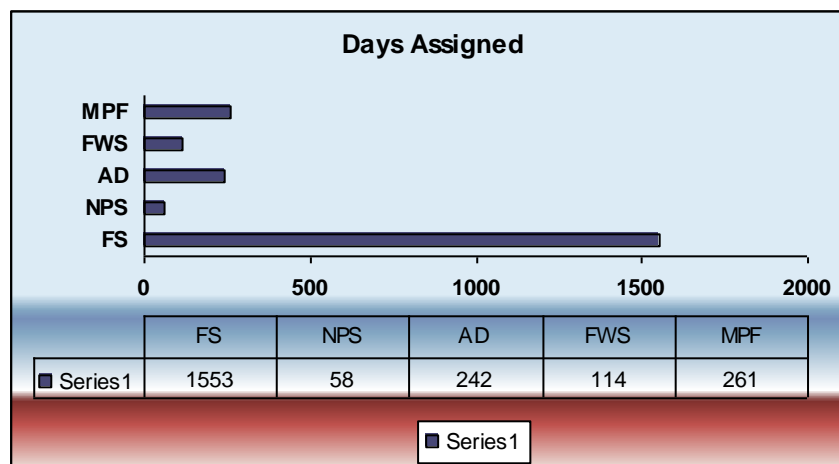
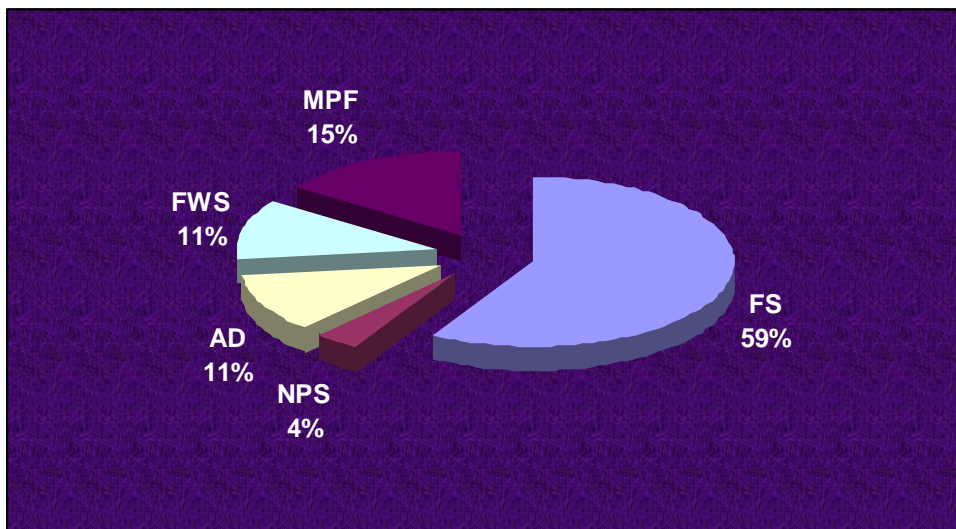
## Fire Activity

In 2007, local initial attack and wildland fire activity for the Shawnee National Forest was relatively average with Class B and Class A fires once again dominating our season.



## 2007 AGENCY RESOURCE ORDER PARTICIPATION

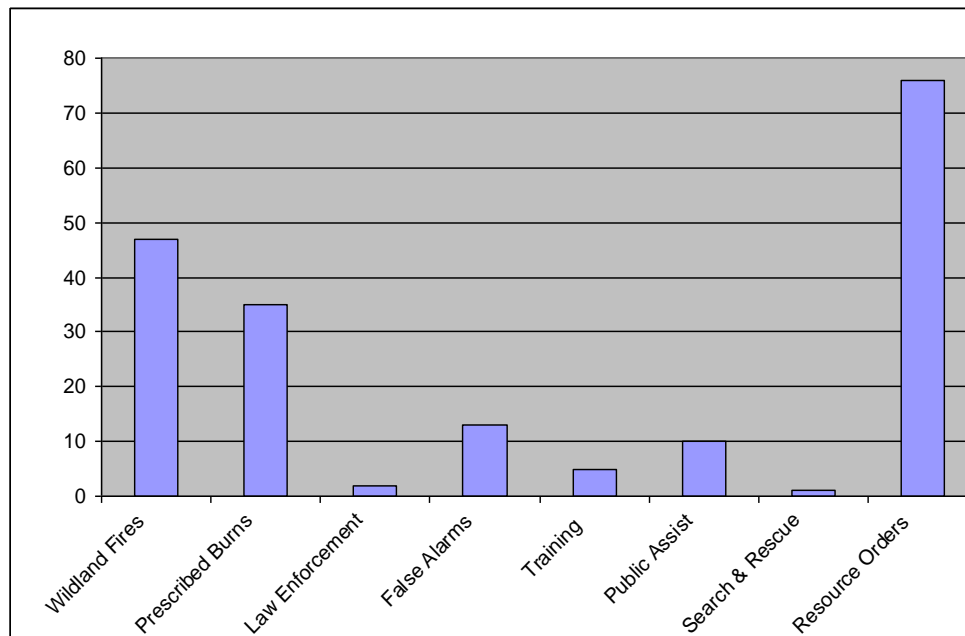
Unfortunately this year, the State of Illinois was unable to participate in wildfires unless they went out as casual hires therefore our fill orders would have been a little bit higher if they were able to accept assignments. The Forest Service were the big players in fills this year, however Midewin National Tall Grass Prairie was really consistent in getting their folks out as well as Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge and Lincoln Home National Historic Site especially once we hit PL5. This agency participation includes individuals who participated on the Illinois Interagency Type II crew as well as single resource order mobilizations.



## WORK LOAD

### Incident Action Reports

As you can see by our 189 reportable incident actions for 2007 that mobilization is still our largest workload, especially when you include the work involved in setting up flights. Also, keep in mind that each incident action represents one incident where we provided support therefore many of these incidents will have multiple resources requests which are not represented in our Incident Action numbers.



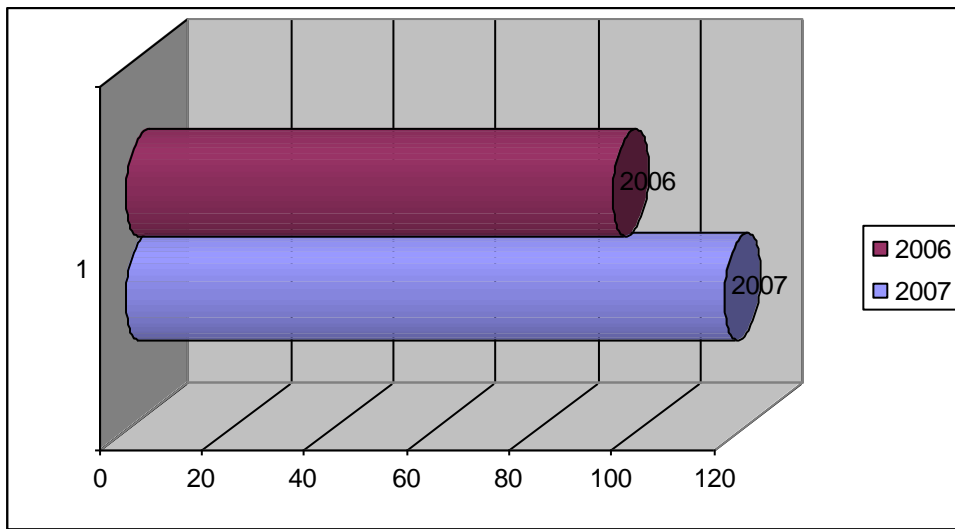
### Mobilization

One of the main things we do here in dispatch, especially during summer fire season, is make travel arrangements for the folks going out on fire assignments. We began doing this in 2006 and feel it is a much better system than having the individuals mobilizing do their own because it reduces the chances of error and keeps the process consistent for the travel agencies and are a better way of tracking not only resources but fire costs.

As you can see, in 2007 the dispatch center made more flight arrangements than we did in 2006 which indicates we mobilized more folks this year than last year. When you look at the taskbook situation below, I believe that this responsibility will only get more active as time goes on due to the fact that more folks are participating in Wildland Fire Suppression efforts.

Making flight arrangements can be a very time consuming process especially when making arrangements for a crew due to the fact that every other dispatch center in the region are also trying to make flight arrangements for their folks, so there is some competition for the open seats on certain flights. This year, due to the problems we were having flying out of Marion, we decided to have folks fly out of St. Louis. By doing this, we got better selections in flight times, fewer delayed or cancelled flights therefore meeting the fire needs, and saving the fire money because costs were usually substantially lower. We usually had someone locally willing to drive folks to the airports which helped eliminate some of the travel and parking stress's which go with flying. I also felt that it was great opportunity to get more local agency folks involved in the fire program who may no otherwise participate.

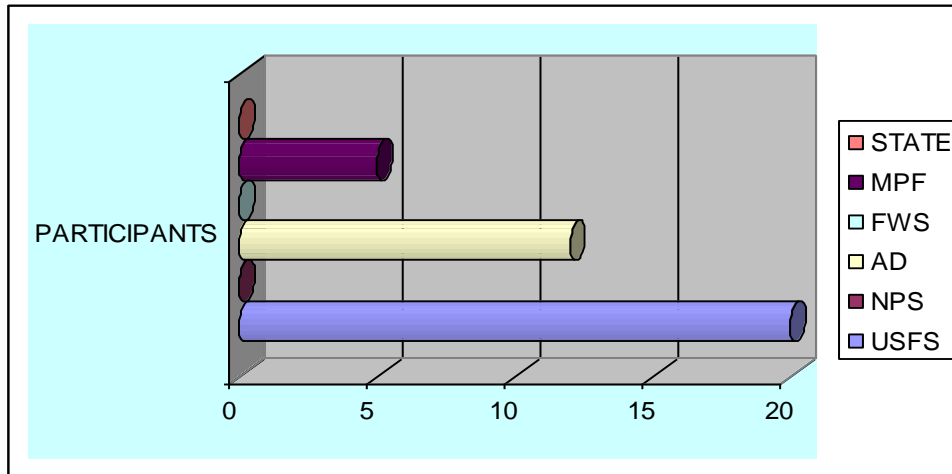
### Flight Arrangements 2007 and 2006



### CREWS

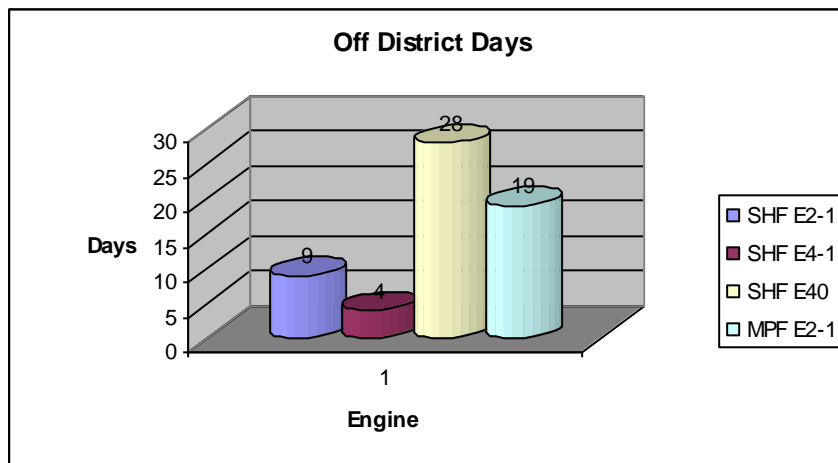
Crew activity was consistent this year as it has been in the past. The Midewin Hotshots went out 9 times participating on 25 wildland fires and 12 prescribed fire projects for a total of 140 days worked. This year we were able to mobilize the Illinois Interagency Type II crew twice. I felt we did very well getting the crews out this year, especially since the State Folks, who typically provide half the crewmembers, were not able to participate due to a travel snafu within the agency. We were, however, able to get two State Folks out as AD's which helped in getting the first crew of the season out. The crews were out for their whole tour totaling 34 work days while participating on 8 fires.

## Type II Crew Participation



## ENGINES

Compared to 2006, our Engine fills were less in 2007. Typically we send an Engine to R4 on Severity, however this year, severity funding was not readily available therefore our off district engine requests were a little lower this year. The dispatch center filled 5 orders for engines - One out of region (California), two to Midewin, and two to the Huron Manistee (one which had a crew rotation). Total number of work days out of area was 60. We placed four requests up to the GACC for fills to assist with the Midewin RX projects.

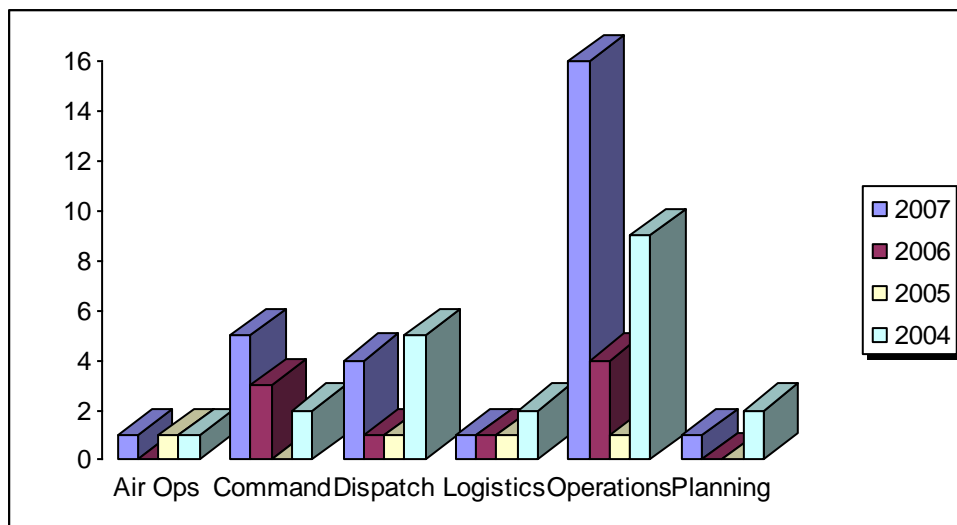
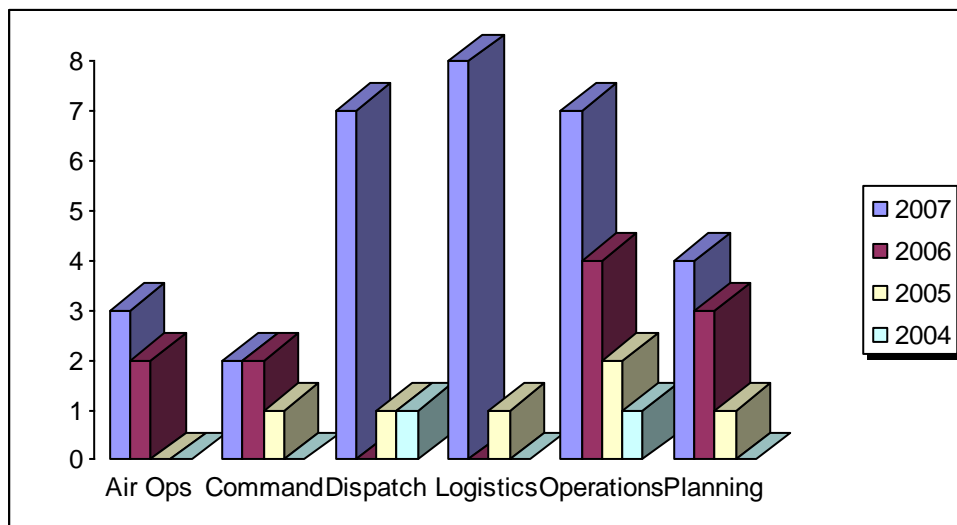


## Qualifications

As you can tell by the graphs below, 2007 was a good year for completed taskbooks. The active taskbook graph includes the newly activated as well as previously activated taskbooks which folks are currently working on. It is very evident by the tremendous increase in the dispatch and logistic sectors over the last 4 years that more and more personnel are willing to venture out into varied fire sectors but it is also evident by the completed and active taskbooks graph that we have a strong operations workforce.

This year, the dispatch center sponsored a D110/ROSS class where we were able to get 12 local folks trained up as EDRC's while getting 5 signed off this summer. This is a great start in building our dispatch base since dispatchers are critical needed positions nationally. Our goal is to have some of these folks take the next step into the EDSD positions after taking the D310 class which we are sponsoring in June.

**Active Taskbooks in 2007**



**Certified Taskbooks 2007**



## CONCLUSION

2007 was the first full year that the Illinois Interagency Dispatch Center was up and running with a full staff. It is evident that we were kept busy all year with wildland fires and prescribed fire activity continuing from February through November and with the processing of resource orders from March through December. In-between we provided training or assisted others with the various training sessions which were hosted by the Shawnee National Forest, we got the IQS (States version of the IQCS) up and running, updated and maintained the IQCS program for the Shawnee National Forest, and continued learning and updating the new ROSS versions implemented throughout the year.

Participation within the region was excellent again this year with the dispatch center sending 11 folks up to the GACC to help out which was double of what we sent last year. This again is a continuation of support that all agencies within the Illinois Interagency Dispatch Center show the region.

The dispatch center was given access to enter weather "observations" for the Crab Orchard Wildlife Refuge (RAWS) station. Previously we entered only the daily weather for the two Forest Service stations, Bean Ridge and Dixon Springs, but by being able to include the Crab Orchard daily readings we now can obtain greater overall area wide weather coverage which will assist all Federal, State, and County land management agencies in the southern part of the State of Illinois.

The dispatch center, along with the Forest Service IT person, started developing an Internet Website (<http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/shawnee/ilicc/>) where all agencies as well as the public can log on and gather information on local, regional, and national wildland fires. Weather, resource status, training, publications and fire safety are areas which are currently up and running. There is still more to be added in 2008 with the hopes of having it complete by 2009. The dispatch center was also able to get the local Fire Mobilization Guide updated to where it followed along the Regional and National mob guides formats.

The new facility that was chosen for our new center has been a long process. We had hoped to be into the new building by 2007 spring fire season, however we didn't quite make that goal, but it has been moving along quite nicely, thanks to the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge maintenance staff and John A Logan construction students. Currently the walls are framed, the heaters are in, the windows are in, and the electrical work has begun. Our new goal is to have it complete and all moved in by May of 2008.

2008 looks to be another active year for our center. With more and more training being sponsored here, due to our successful use of the John A Logan College facilities, more individuals getting qualified and participating, the upcoming move to our new facilities, our gains in working with the various agencies such as National Fish and Wildlife Service, the State of Illinois, Midewin National Tall Grass Prairie, and the National Park Service, as well as the dispatchers willingness to become involved in the various regional working teams, we will once again have plenty to keep us busy. It is very exciting seeing where we have come in the past year, and I can only see a bright future of the Illinois Interagency Dispatch Center

Molly A Campbell  
Center Manager